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Oceans and the law of the sea

Letter dated 25 July 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Nicaragua to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On the instructions of my Government, I have the honour to transmit herewith a note dated 22 July 2002 addressed to Mr. Guillermo Pérez-Cadalso Arias, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Honduras, in which the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Nicaragua responds to the letter dated 16 July 2002 sent by the Government of Honduras to the Government of Nicaragua concerning the announcement made by the Nicaraguan authorities about a call for tenders for petroleum exploration in various parts of the territory of Nicaragua (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex issued as an official document of the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) Eduardo J. **Sevilla Somoza**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

* A/57/150.

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Annex to the letter dated 25 July 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Nicaragua to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 16 July 2002, protesting in the name of the Government of the Republic of Honduras the public announcement made by the Nicaraguan authorities concerning future oil and gas concessions.

In that regard, I have the honour to inform you that the Nicaraguan Energy Institute has called for tenders for petroleum exploration in various parts of the national territory, including the portion of the Nicaraguan Caribbean Sea over which Nicaragua has historically exercised sovereign rights; hence, all the areas in which concessions might be granted to explore for gas and oil are within the national territory of Nicaragua.

Nonetheless, the Government of the Republic of Nicaragua is giving thought to appropriate mechanisms in keeping with the rules and procedures of international law for granting concessions in Nicaraguan maritime areas in the Caribbean Sea to which Honduras laid formal claim in its counter-memorial filed before the International Court of Justice on 21 March 2002.

While in general reserving our position with regard to the observations of fact and law put forward in your communication, I must point out that the terms of paragraph 6 are inappropriate. First of all, they seem to indicate an unawareness of the spirit of neighbourliness and cooperation that prevailed when the Presidents of Nicaragua and Honduras met recently in Guasaule on 11 July. Secondly, they are not in keeping with the desire of both our Presidents to continue to conduct our international relations entirely through the peaceful means that diplomacy and international law make available to States.

[*Signed*] Norman **Caldera Cardenal**